



FSU-WESTERN: In Ukraine, hot, dry weather continued to aid rapid harvest activities. Reports from Ukraine as of August 23 indicated grain was about 80 percent harvested. The hot, dry weather conditions increased stress on filling corn and sunflowers, especially in southeastern areas where unfavorable dryness has persisted since early July. Early-week hot weather was observed at most locations in Ukraine, with maximum temperatures ranging from 35 to 38 degrees C. By week's end, however, cooler weather was accompanied by spotty showers, alleviating heat stress on crops. In Russia, hot, dry weather in southern areas (North Caucasus, lower Volga Valley, and the southern portion of the Central Black Soils Region) favored harvest activities, but stressed filling summer crops (corn, sunflowers, and sugar beets). Farther north, frequent showers (10-50 mm or more) maintained wet conditions from Central Region eastward through Volga Vyatsk and the upper Volga Valley, slowing harvest activities and fieldwork for planting the 2001 winter grain crop. The optimum time for planting winter grains in northern Russia is late August. Reports from Russia as of August 21 indicated that spring grains and pulses, excluding corn, were about 43 percent harvested. Elsewhere, light to moderate showers (10-74 mm) in Belarus interrupted grain harvesting. Weekly temperatures averaged 2 to 4 degrees C above normal in Ukraine and southern Russia, hastening maturity in summer crops. Weekly temperatures in the Baltics and northern Russia averaged near normal.